

Amherst Recycling & Refuse Management Committee

Meeting Minutes

September 5, 2013 • DPW Conference Room • 4:30 PM

Attending - Laurel Dickey, John Root, Sue Morrello, Arnie Alper, Brenda Kennedy-Davies, Susan Waite.

School composting –

- Do we approach the need to meet the upcoming state mandate regarding food waste by starting with defining the cost to the school committee, or do we ask how we can help them be prepared to meet the mandate when it goes into effect? Susan will do research about the real cost of composting in the schools.
- John suggested that we present the idea to the school committee that the school systems move with haste to position themselves to meet the composting mandate that will go into effect in July 2014. It is pointed out that the schools that are composting currently would likely meet the specified criteria. The schools, however, are not paying for the real cost of disposal of the compost. There is a real cost associated with removing any trash – solid waste or compost or recycling – and the entity that benefits by its removal should pay the associated cost. Need a letter that explains to school committees the upcoming mandate, history of support by DPW, and encourages them to move through a transition where the school budgets and systems will be prepared to bear the real costs of all refuse removal and support the composting system that will be expected under the mandate. Higher trash removal fees are to be expected in the next 5-10 years because local landfills are closing and there is a state moratorium on new incinerators. Need real dollars for next year's budget. DPW currently charges the schools \$100 per ton all inclusive. This does not cover the actual cost of all the DPW's waste removal expenses.
- Guilford has told Susan W. that no additional schools may join the composting program unless the town collects additional fees for this. Susan is meeting with Faye Brady and Ron Bohonowicz – neither of whom has control over the school budget. Laurel suggests that Susan could ask Rob Detweiller (ARSD Financial Manager) to attend these meetings, as well.
- Laurel will draft a letter that could be sent to the school committees to address this issue. Members felt that a face to face presentation would be most useful, as well. Laurel will find out when the committees meet. Maria Geryk, Superintendent of Schools, has morning coffees where this issue could be broached. Susan W. will invite Guilford to attend our October meeting to discuss the school trash removal situation and the communication he has had with the local trash haulers.

John will provide concise information at the October meeting about why it would be beneficial to move to a Pay-as-You-Throw system.

Important dates: Thursday 9/12/13 Downtown Block Party (committee helping with trash processing), Saturday 9/28/13 Hazardous Waste Collection (25 lbs/gals free to Amherst residents, charges for bulbs and paint, and for out-of-towners, must register by 9/22/13)

Agenda items for October:

- Pay-As-You-Go explanation

- Letter re School composting/trash removal and related fee structure
- Reminder to local restaurants re: foam ban date
- October 31 end date of trial composting at the Transfer Station